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WorldBriefs

Dams play role in floods: WWF

New research commissioned by the World Wildlife Foundation (WWF) has warned that dams built on the premise of reducing flooding can often exacerbate the problem, producing catastrophic consequences. The research paper "Dams and Floods" explains that dams are often designed with a very poor knowledge of the potential for extreme flood occurrences.

Where data does exist, it may fail to consider current risks such as increased rainfall due to climate change, or increased run-off due to deforestation or the drainage of wetlands. The loss of these natural sponges for floodwaters within the river basin increases the risk of extreme floods. WWF argues that many of these problems could be avoided if the recommendations of the first ever World Commission on Dams (WCD) were applied to future dam projects.

Kenyan AIDS orphans left to fend for themselves

June 25 - One million AIDS orphans are not receiving adequate care and protection from Kenyan state-run children's services, according to a new report released by Human Rights Watch (HRW) to coincide with this week's United Nations General Assembly Special Session on HIV-AIDS in New York. "If their parents had died in any other way, these children would have been at the top of the agenda" for state and social protection, said Joanne Csete of HRW's Children's Rights Division and the report's author. "But because the parents died of AIDS,

...Continued on page 2

Spices, oil, and blood

US corporations continue to exploit Indonesia

CHERYL SEAL

At Disney World's Epcot Center in sunny Orlando, Florida, crowds of well-fed, smiling children and their parents dressed in bright summer cottons, crowd into the Universe of Energy attraction. There, surrounded by a dizzying array of special effects, they are treated to "Ellen's Energy Adventure," featuring a very young Ellen Degeneres and Bill Nye the Science Guy, who take them on a tour of the wonder world of energy - a crowd-pleasing experience complete with life-like dinosaurs.

A world away in the jungles of Sumatra in Indonesia, a bone-thin family of Aceh natives squat inside their tiny hut clad in worn rags, waiting to eat their meager midday meal. Suddenly, Indonesian soldiers burst through the door screaming "Where are the men? Where are the GAM (Gerakan Aceh Mer, members of the Aceh freedom movement) hiding?" There is a terrified scream as one of the men seizes a tiny baby from the arms of its sister. He dashes the child to the ground outside the hut. In an act of hideous brutality, he pours the boiling water used to prepare the family dinner over the screaming child. No one is allowed to go to the baby's aid. The next day at sunrise, after the soldiers have left, the baby dies.

What do these two seemingly

unrelated and grossly different scenarios have in common? They were both "sponsored" by Exxon. While linking its name to fun-filled all-American experiences such as Disneyworld, Exxon soaks up PR and pushes its agenda (which, of course, is fossil fuel) to kids and their parents. In Indonesia, by applying pressure to the unstable government, Exxon (d.b.a. ExxonMobil) has triggered a wave of violence against the Aceh natives who have been fighting for their independence and control of their homeland and future for three decades. Why? Beneath the forest floor in the Aceh homeland lays a rich reserve of natural gas, while off its coast lays vast, untapped oil reserves.

But Aceh and Indonesia are not "just another" foreign conflict. In this struggle and its history is the darkly mirrored image of the present U.S. leadership.

The Shaping of Modern Indonesia

Indonesia has long been a dream come true for opportunists (until this century they were called "explorers"). With its 17,000 islands sprinkled across the equator in the South Pacific atop a zone of tectonic upheaval, it is a land of incredible biodiversity and dramatic landscapes. Among its main islands are Sumatra, Borneo, Java, Timor (East and West), and Bali (of "South Pacific" fame). Its forests and mountains are treasure

chests of exotic plants and animals, while its human population is just as diverse - as recently as the 1980s, an estimated 250 different languages were spoken here.

The first westerners to exploit the region were the Portuguese, who, in the 17th century, began to "mine" the forests for spices while dominating the natives. These fragrant exports earned the region the name of "the Spice Islands." Since then, this land, whose native inhabitants in some regions have lineages extending back as much as one million years, has been the focus of a greedy tug-of-war between different foreign powers

country's first president. Suharno was a visionary who pursued an ideal he called "Pancasila," a state of Indonesian unity in which ethnic and religious tolerance would prevail. It was a dream that was doomed to failure; half-way round the globe, forces were massing that would ultimately topple Suharno and his government.

In the United States, after World War Two, the age of the automobile had dawned. Americans in growing numbers were heading off to "See the USA in their Chevrolets" - great big gas-guzzling Chevrolets. They came home from their cruises to modern oil-heated homes in proliferating suburbs. Existing U.S. sources, already heavily exploited, soon couldn't match the demand for abundant, cheap fuel and so the oil companies looked

elsewhere...to places such as Indonesia. At that time, oil-rich Southeast Asia was struggling for autonomy, urged on by the growing Asian communist party. To address this impediment to the oil companies, as early as 1953, the U.S. National Security Council had adopted a policy of "appropriate action in collaboration with friendly countries to prevent permanent communist control of Indonesia."

By the late 1950s, the U.S. was pouring \$20 million per year into the Indonesian military.

...Continued on page 5

"By the late 1950s, the U.S. was pouring \$20 million per year into the Indonesian military."

and between these powers and the Indonesian native peoples. No Indonesian resources have been at the center of more collective strife, bloodshed, and environmental damage than oil and natural gas.

After World War Two, Indonesia made a determined stand for its autonomy and by 1950 had thrown off domination by the Japanese (who had commandeered the oil and liquid natural gas supplies during the war), then the British and Indian armies, and, finally, the Dutch. The new Indonesian leader Suharno (not to be confused with the later dictator Suharto) eventually became the

Pressure on Governments to share draft Americas plan

GUMISAI MUTUME

More than two months after 34 governments negotiating a Free Trade Area of the Americas (FTAA) pledged to publish their draft agreement, citizens groups are still trying to pry the document from officials hands.

"They promised to release the document more than 70 days ago," says Carrie

Biggs-Adams of the 740,000-strong labour union, Communication Workers of America (CWA). "The reason why they will not release it is because they know we are right when we say the FTAA will negatively affect the lives of millions of poor people in the region."

Negotiations over the FTAA - which will encompass more than

750 million people and constitute the world's biggest free trade area when established in 2005 - have until now only been privy to government officials and their corporate advisers.

"There needs to be public debate on the agreement, but by seeking fast-track (trade promotion authority) the Bush administration seeks to stifle debate," says Biggs-Adams, referring to President George W. Bush's push for the power to negotiate trade pacts without fear of Congressional amendment.

A number of groups including the CWA this week intensified calls for the official release of the draft text of the 250-page FTAA agreement. A draft of the document's chapter on investment was leaked in April,

during the Third Summit of the Americas in Quebec, Canada, but the rest of the document remains shrouded in secrecy.

Bill Frenzel of the Brookings Institution, an influential Washington think-tank, sees no need to rush the release of the proposed agreement.

"Until governments are ready to seek ratification, it would be unusual to have drafts of an agreement floating around," says Frenzel. "It is in the nature of activists to throw everything out onto the streets and they say just about the same things about every other trade agreement."

A US trade official blamed the delay in releasing the document on the process of translating it from English into French,

...Continued on page 3



Check out page 3 for a first hand account of the recent anti-EU protests in Gothenburg, Sweden. Photo source: www.sweden.indymedia.org

WorldBriefs

...Continued from page 1

with all of the stigma that implies, they're at the bottom." With an estimated 2.1 million people - or 14 percent of the country's sexually active adult population - infected with HIV, Kenya ranks ninth on the list of most-affected countries, substantially higher than Nigeria which has about a five percent rate, but less than half of Botswana's 35.8 percent, the world's highest. AIDS is distinctive among lethal epidemics in that most of the lives it takes are those of relatively young adults between 20 and 40 years old. In Africa, where almost 80 percent of the 22 million AIDS deaths have occurred worldwide, the vast majority of victims are parents. (www.hrw.org)

Light weapons a major killer of women and children

June 20 - According to a recent report from UNICEF UK: "Childhood under Siege", eight out of ten casualties of war today are civilians, one third of them children, who are now joining the ranks of displaced and refugee people in far greater numbers than ever before. The report examines the role of small arms and light weapons in the massive destruction of childhood, and what developed countries can do to help. "Small arms and light weapons have been responsible for more than three million deaths in the last decade alone, of which eight out of ten were women and children. In terms of the carnage they cause, these are 'weapons of mass destruction', whose relative cheapness and ease of use facilitates their spread and employment - including by children themselves," said David Bull, Executive Director of UNICEF UK.

UNICEF is lobbying a number of countries - including the UK - to ensure that laws pertaining to the manufacture and sale of small arms and light weapons are tightened so that these type of arms do not fall into the wrong hands: "UK arms legislation, for instance, is out of date, full of loopholes and enables unscrupulous companies and individuals to export weapons that can be used to fuel conflict and hurt civilians - including children," David Bull said.

Torture based on sexual identity

June 22 - Tortured, ill-treated, sexually assaulted, forcibly subjected to medical or psychiatric treatment, forced to flee their home countries in terror - the world over, lesbians, gay men, bisexual and transgender (LGBT) people are at particular risk of human rights violations because of their sexual identity, Amnesty International has said. In a new report, launched on June 22nd, the organisation describes the plight of the thousands of people who are tortured and ill-treated because their real or perceived sexuality is a threatening social order. The report includes documented examples from some 30 countries, but the full extent of the problem is undoubtedly much larger. In over 70 countries same-sex relations are considered a crime, and in some instances they incur the death penalty. "Despite being a widespread occurrence across continents and cultures, the torture and ill-treatment suffered by LGBT people is surrounded by a

...Continued on page 6

Future for sale

JEFFREY J COOK

The dust is still settling on the ruins of the overhyped tech dream in Australia and overseas. Technology stocks have lost over half their "value" in the last year, leaving many an investor, new business and superannuation fund worse for wear.

In a neat twist their "progressive" flirtation with the new economy has cost them dearly while those that sat on their hands and money - "conservative" investors - find themselves in the lead. We may have little sympathy for high net worth investors who lost a relatively small proportion of their funds, but before we congratulate ourselves we should ask "what about the impact on the rest of us?"

It is over the next several years that the fallout from the disintegration of so much value will impact on the rest of Australia. Billions of dollars worth of value has evaporated, leaving many people with near-worthless stocks - except for a few lucky ones that made money and got out early before reality set in and let out the hot air in the technology bubble.

The medium and long term effects of the tech wreck will impact on our lives for many years to come, with one example being the recent and continuing fall in the value of Telstra and other similar businesses. Likewise the separation of the old and new economies was never real and a downturn in one will eventually affect the other directly and

indirectly. And that affects all of us.

It was the new industries that are supposed to provide the backbone to the "networked" or "knowledge" nation of the future, our nation. The dramatic re-allocation of resources to the tech and media sectors in 1998 and 1999 was driven by this same idea - the idea that crazy growth in tech and media was being "accelerated" by the new technologies and that this growth could and would go on for some time.

But the whole gig was basically a con by the promoters of Big Technology and Media - the share analysts who need big returns, the big media and technology suppliers and providers, and the "bright young boys and girls": programmers and day traders fresh from a computer, business or media course - who thought they were kings and queens of the brave new media and blindly put their faith in imaginary profits.

These irrationally exuberant players sold out a promising future that a less exuberant and more critical progress would have ensured and underwritten.

They rightly saw the benefits the new ideas could bring over the next five or ten years but made the grave mistake of collapsing this future into a one or two year timeframe. The classic mistake of overestimating the short term effects and underestimating the longer term effects was yet again spurred on by the anticipation of short term gain.

This has effectively eaten away

the promise of our future - devouring the benefits a more gradual development of new ideas, new jobs and new way of working would have brought. Basically leaving a burnt out technology "husk" for us to live off for the next five or so years.

Now sceptics and conservatives alike can claim that this new technology future could "never have worked" and it will be several years before new ideas can find a suitable and successful pathway through the difficult business of starting up and operating.

Not only will the process of getting new ideas into action be slowed - those sacked or retrenched from the failure of over 30 major new technology companies and countless other projects have been thrown onto the job market. Subsequently job opportunities, wages and conditions have all been reduced. Meanwhile thousands of graduates are still being turned out into the technology and media workplace.

The superannuation funds that bought into the tech market will have to seek other sectors to invest in. Back we go to supporting old and low value service economy industries, that do not foster wealth sharing though multi-skilled jobs and profit-sharing schemes, and the wealth gap widens further.

As John Gailbraith said of the US in 1999 "we have made ourselves into (one of) the most unequal society in terms of income" - and this also applies to other advanced countries such as Australia.

Our future, like our government

institutions such as Telstra, Australia Post and the ABC, has a value and its value must be managed to protect it from those that seek purely short term gains. This is really what governments are meant to provide - long term solutions that benefit the majority. Business on the other hand is specifically designed to meet short term aims or to develop medium term aims for a minority of stakeholders. The aims of business - illustrated by the unregulated roller coaster of the sharemarket - should be treated accordingly as something separate from and very different to the aims of government.

Those that would 'eat the future' work against the idea of a government of the common wealth, and if left to their own devices, against even their own future interests.

We need a more critical, staged and equitable approach to new technologies and media, one that is excited and informed by the potential of progress and at the same time builds things to work and last a long time. Such an approach would better deal with the short term downturn in new ideas and new technologies because it would understand that supporting change and new ideas return enormous long term benefits for all.

It is up to us to recognise and join with those that work for the long term and for equity of wealth and advantage in technology and the media - the future builders, not the future spoilers.

Undercover police violence at World Bank protests in Barcelona

NIK BEURET

Although the World Bank cancelled a conference planned for Barcelona, Spain - instead opting of for a 'virtual' conference online - protesters still filled the streets on the eve of the event.

Between 30,000 and 50,000 people marched through the streets of Barcelona on June 24th. The march was specifically a protest against the World Bank, which was to be holding its 2001 Annual Bank Conference on Development Economics meeting there. This meeting was 'moved' to the internet because of fears that the meeting would be disrupted by protesters.

As with similar protests in Prague, Melbourne and Seattle, the march generally had a festive mood with various types of music, drumming, dancing, singing and chanting. Along the march, several chain-store and

large bank windows were broken, and several buildings were spray painted with slogans. The police, whose presence along the route was relatively small, did not interfere with the protesters.

Things took a turn for the worse, however, as the march ended with a gathering in Placa de Catalunya. Here, according to witnesses and international media, undercover police dressed as activists physically provoked real activists, which gave riot police an excuse to attack the crowd with truncheons. Thirty-two people were injured during the attack.

The police charged the crowd after a small group of masked men and women, who appeared to be police agents, staged a fight at the edge of the park in full view of a line of riot police. A few dozen demonstrators were pulled into the violence.

"Police provoked the fight.

They were part of it," said Ada Colau, a spokeswoman for the Campaign Against the World Bank.

Reporters watched as the police appeared to use the staged scuffle as bait to pull protesters in and then use it as a pretext to charge into the park. A second charge emptied the park within minutes.

The masked assailants, some of them apparently wearing earphones, had gathered in groups on the fringes of the protest march as it arrived at the park. They were wearing knapsacks and carrying sticks, but were able to walk freely past police, pull on their masks and position themselves between the edge of the crowd in the park and the police lines 25 yards away.

The fight began when one



Sourced from www.indymedia.org

man grabbed another and pulled him to the ground. Others from the same group began kicking and slugging each other. When demonstrators saw what was going on and joined the fight, the police charged into the park. The men and women involved in the scuffle then walked through the police line and boarded the police vans.

A reporter asked one of them if they were police. He at first said yes, and then said no, before walking, undeterred by police, to the vans.

The City of Barcelona has indicated that it will investigate the provocations.

Direct from Gothenburg

The following is a transcript of an interview for 3CR Radio - 'Jonas' from Gothenburg, Sweden, attended the protests against the European Unit Summit from June 14-16th. It's important to note that this is only one person's account of the violent events that occurred during the Summit.

DOMENICA SETTLE

Domenica: I thought I'd start by asking where you're from...?

Jonas: Well, I'm making a documentary on all the protests up here [Gothenburg]. I've been following...the organising of the protests, for six months, so I'm not actually in any movement. But now after this tragic event happened, I have started working with a group taking care of all the people in prison.

D: So what were the protests? Most people won't actually know much about what's been happening in this last week.

J: Now the protests were against the EU. The European Union is becoming a very neoliberal project, with a lot of privatising of all the public institutions in many countries. Also, they've been building up new laws making it almost impossible to get in here if you're a refugee from the third world...basically they're turning the European Union (sic) into a not very nice place to live, in our point of view anyway.

D: So how many people were there, and what were the protests like?

J: It was 25,000 people, almost...The [problems] started on Thursday...There were three huge demonstrations planned and all those three demonstrations went peacefully - no riots, no trouble at all. But on Thursday morning, the police decided to shut down one of the schools where activists stayed. Activists stayed in schools all over the town. But they decided to shut down one of the schools [by surrounding it and not letting people enter or leave], and after that people went mad and tried to bust friends out of there. And then the police didn't know what to do with the situation. They hadn't expected so many people getting mad...So they totally lost control, and never got it back during the whole weekend. That's my point

of view.

D: And at which point did it become a riot?

J: Well...there were several small riots [and one big one]. There were people throwing stones and shouting and fighting with the police on Thursday, late afternoon, already. There was a huge protest rally on Friday morning, and then after that rally, some three or four thousand people tried to walk from there to the congress centre where the EU top summit was held. And the police tried to push them back...That's the question what almost everyone, every demonstrator, asks themselves up here, is why did the police push all the demonstrators down the biggest shopping street in Gothenburg, instead of pushing them on to the park that was quite nearby? And that's what happened. That was the hugest riot, where I guess you've seen the pictures from, with burning barricades and people throwing stones or bicycles or everything on the police.

D: A lot of people in Australia have heard that there was shooting, but they don't really know the details. Do you know how that happened, what happened exactly?

J: Yeah...this riot of Friday morning was followed by a very tense day, and this ended with a huge demonstration, a huge peaceful demonstration on Friday evening, and a Reclaim the City street party. And during the Reclaim the City street party, the police decided to attack the street party and tried to arrest people. And then fighting started, broke out again, and during that fighting the police shot three people. And again the police were too few and they didn't know what they were doing and everything got confused. So they were afraid for their lives and they pulled up their guns and shot people... Normally Swedish police don't carry guns into riot situations. So I don't know why these people had their firearms with them. It shouldn't happen. Nobody got shot in Prague [at the S26 World Bank protests last year] and there were more police there, there were more demonstrators and everything was more violent. But Swedish police didn't cope with the situation.

D: I understand some of the police were very overworked and tired.

J: Yeah, some policemen had worked for 17 hours straight. There had been problems getting food out to all the policemen...This was on the Friday. Then on Saturday when there was a huge protest rally against police violence during these days, and that protest rally got surrounded by 800 cops. Then some of the policemen put down their shields and their helmets in front of their commanders and just walked out of there. Because they said we can't work here anymore. So many policemen were not satisfied with their command.

D: I gather this is not particularly normal behaviour for Swedish police to be so violent.

J: No, no it's not. But it's normal for Swedish police to try to stop demonstrations, to confront demonstrations and try to scare away people with horses and dogs. The problem here is that there were too few police. There usually are more... There are usually like two demonstrators to one cop. And now there were ten demonstrators to one cop. And they weren't used to that situation. So they tried to use tactics that they always use, which is to scare away people with dogs and being many. But they failed, because there were too many demonstrators. And then they lost control.

D: And why is it do you think that globalisation demonstrations are being sites of riots and that

rioting seems to be becoming bigger and bigger as part of this protest movement?

J: OK, this is my point of view, but perhaps it's because if you say no and if you try to fight where it hurts, then the system has to fight back. And if you then don't give up but stand your ground, then there is violence going to happen. Because...that's the only way the system understands what you're saying.

D: There's a bit of a perception, at least in Australia, that while people generally at protests might be really well informed on the issues, often the people who actually do the rioting end of the protests don't understand the issues. Do you think that's true?

J: Not the people that I met...I think they do understand the issues, and I think they're very into

the issues... At least the people I talked to during the making of my documentary.

D: My understanding is that one of the protesters was actually shot in the back...What was the media portrayal like in Sweden?

J: The media...only has taken the police side. And says that it was correct use of weaponry and everything. And very few of the Swedish media are even talking about the three demonstrators being shot. The Social Democratic Party of Sweden was in charge, is in government right now. They gave roses to all the police officers working during these days. And they're supposed to be a workers' party and they give roses to a police force which shoots demonstrators. And the media cheers them on. So that's the situation here.



Source: www.sweden.indymedia.org

Pressure on Governments to share draft Americas plan

Continued from page 1

Portuguese, and Spanish.

Unimpressed by such explanations, the US-based Alliance for Responsible Trade, a network of labour, environmental, and political groups and think-tanks, is asking sympathisers to write urging members of Congress to vote against fast track.

Ministers from prospective FTAA member states promised in April that, "in keeping with our commitment to transparency, we have agreed to publicize the draft FTAA Agreement in the four official languages, after the Third Summit of the Americas."

The Apr 20-22 Quebec

summit ended with similar declarations of intent by the leaders from all the countries of the western hemisphere except Cuba, which is excluded from the FTAA.

"If our governments are truly committed to transparency, they must release the text and also commit to releasing future drafts," says Hector de la Cueva, general secretary of the Hemispheric Social Alliance (HSA), an umbrella organisation claiming a combined membership of some 45 million people.

The HSA also released an analysis of the leaked investment

chapter. "The people of the Americas have the right to know what type of deal our negotiators are attempting to impose on the hemisphere," says de la Cueva.

According to the analysis, the FTAA investment chapter extends rights to corporations much like those enshrined in the North American Free Trade Agreement between Canada, Mexico and the United States. It would allow investors to sue governments for breach of any of a list of obligations. This, opponents charge, will restrict the ability of states to protect the environment and public welfare.

Concerns over similar provisions helped galvanise opposition to the abortive Multilateral Agreement on Investment.

"The investor-state provisions were first proposed in order to avoid nationalisation of foreign companies by governments," says David Waskow, international policy analyst at the non-governmental group Friends of the Earth US. "They go way beyond most national laws and are rather out-dated."

Also like NAFTA, the draft FTAA investment chapter proposes that governments treat foreign investors as favourably as

domestic ones although it would grant member states one opportunity to list exemptions to this rule.

"The prospects for obtaining effective exceptions are limited by the lack of consultation in most countries between negotiators and the general public, as well as parliamentarians and sub-national governments," the HSA says in its critique of the chapter.

However, the entire text of the leaked chapter is enclosed in brackets, indicating a lack of official consensus.

Sourced from IPS

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The Media Circus is a two-day event that will bring together people who create, consume, critique and distribute media content that challenges and questions our culture, society, and the way we live.

Some of the program highlights include a look at the ownership of public space; history and politics of culture jamming, idea bombs and artistic dissent; exploring the techniques that effect journalism; and comprehensive introduction to cyber activism.

Participants include Naomi Klein, Gavin Sullivan, Bob Burton, Fiona Katauskas, John Hughes, Geert Lovink, and many many others including YOU.

July 12th - Launch at the Public Office - 7pm onwards
 July 14th and 15th - at Trades Hall from 10:30am onwards.

www.antimedia.net/mediacircus

Greens and car-makers lock horns over fuel standards

DANIELLE KNIGHT

At a time of high fuel prices and heightened concern about global warming, environmentalists are calling for higher fuel efficiency standards for US automobiles.

These, they argue, will save consumers billions of dollars and significantly cut heat-trapping emissions. The fuel economy of US cars and light trucks is at its lowest point in 20 years, says David Friedman, a senior analyst at the Union of Concerned Scientists (UCS).

"Making cars go further on a gallon of gasoline is a simple solution to halting the rising gas prices and global warming pollution that we face here," adds Daniel Becker, director of the global warming and energy programme at the non-governmental Sierra Club.

Carmakers, however, oppose legal requirements to raise fuel economy standards.

Instead, they prefer incentives to develop new technology.

According to a new UCS report, US automakers have it within their economic and technological means to produce cars capable of traveling 17 kilometres on one litre of fuel by 2012, and 23 kilometres per litre by 2020.

This would be nearly a 75 percent improvement on today's fuel efficiency, according to the 117-page report, 'Drilling in Detroit: Tapping Automaker Ingenuity to Build Safe and Efficient Automobiles.' The US city of Detroit is the hub of the country's automotive industry.

Current US standards require the average car to achieve about

11.6 kilometres per litre, while the average light truck must meet a standard of 8.8 kilometres per litre.

Increasing the fuel efficiency of vehicles in the United States would dramatically reduce the amount of greenhouse gases emitted into the atmosphere, say environmentalists.

Last year, cars and light trucks accounted for more than one-fifth of US emissions that scientist believe cause global warming, says the report. With 4.6 percent of the world's population, the United States is the world's leading emitter of greenhouse gases, accounting for roughly 25 percent of the global total.

Increasing fuel economy to 17 kilometres per litre by 2012 would also mean the reduction of about 75 million kilograms of toxic emissions and 160 million kilograms of smog-forming pollutants, according to the report.

In response to high fuel prices, President George W. Bush has proposed an energy strategy that seeks to burn more coal and drill for more oil. But critics say that developing new technologies that increase fuel efficiency should be prioritized.

"Significant fuel economy improvements would dwarf supplies obtained from proposed expansion into environmentally sensitive areas such as the Arctic National Wildlife Refuge," says the report.

Higher fuel efficiency standards in the next 18 years will have saved more than four times the oil expected to be present in the refuge at today's prices, it adds.

"Instead of drilling for new oil in public lands, we should tap Detroit's ingenuity to produce cars and trucks that travel 40 miles on each gallon of gas," says Friedman, at UCS. This would be equivalent to 17 kilometres per litre.

Yet, he adds, Congress has not significantly updated standards for vehicles since 1985.

"A combination of federal inaction on fuel economy policy and the increased marketing of sport utility vehicles (SUVs) and minivans as substitutes for passenger cars have led to this point," says the UCS report.

According to the Worldwatch Institute, an environmental think-tank here, from 1975 to 1999, SUVs increased their share of new car sales from 20 percent to 46 percent.

As more people in the United States buy these vehicles, which are considered light trucks and allowed to meet lower fuel efficiency standards than cars, fuel economy has decreased seven percent since 1987, says the UCS.

While acknowledging the inefficiencies of SUVs, the Alliance of Automobile Manufacturers has issued a statement urging "Members of Congress not to raise (fuel economy) standards, but rather to support development of breakthrough technology and consumer incentives for purchase of advanced technologies such as electric vehicles, hybrids and fuel cells."

But environmentalists say raising fuel economy standards is an essential element to quicker, cleaner and cheaper energy solutions.

Switching reliance away from SUVs toward hybrid electric vehicle technologies currently available could bring the US fleet to at least 23 kilometres per litre, says the report. Hybrid technology combines two or more sources of power, such as a gasoline engine, an electric motor or a fuel cell.

Switching to hybrids, it says, would save nearly five million barrels of oil a day by 2020 and 1.5 million barrels a day by 2010.

Such a fleet, says the UCS, would more than double current fuel economy levels and could save consumers between 3,500 dollars and 6,500 dollars in fuel costs over the life of the vehicle.

Facing more strict fuel efficiency regulations abroad, Japanese and European manufacturers have already marketed several hybrid electric vehicles.

Toyota Motor Corp has announced that it has developed two more fuel cell hybrid vehicles, as part of efforts to meet 2010 Japanese emissions standards by as early as 2005. Fuel cells use an electrochemical process to create electricity by mixing hydrogen and oxygen, with distilled water as the only byproduct.

The Japanese automaker currently has two hybrid vehicles on the market - the Estima minivan and the Prius compact sedan. Toyota says it has sold about 60,000 Prius vehicles in Japan, Europe and North America.

sourced from IPS

Australia continues to ignore UN Convention

CLAIRE IRWIN

The 28th of July is the 50th anniversary of the United Nations Convention Relating to the Status of Refugees. Although the Convention and the associated 1967 Protocol contain some obvious flaws, it is the only international document that requires signatory states to apply international human rights standards and agreements toward refugees. At a time when Australian Government advisers are calling for Australia to become the first country to withdraw from the convention, it is becoming increasingly important for activists to defend it.

The Convention was created in response to the large numbers of refugees created during the First and Second World Wars. It originally only applied to those who were seeking refuge because of events that occurred before 1951, however the 1967 Protocol removed that time limitation.

The Convention defines a refugee as: 'any person who, owing to a well-founded fear of

being persecuted for reasons of race, religion, nationality, membership of a particular social group or political opinion, is outside the country of his nationality and is unable or, owing to such fear, is unwilling to avail himself of the protection that country, or who, not having a nationality and being outside the country of this former habitual residence, is unable or, owing to such fear, is unwilling to return to it.'

When the Convention was adopted in 1951 there were an estimated 1.5 million refugees in the world. By 1990 this had grown to 14.9 million and by 2000 to 22.26 million. However, these figures only record those who meet the definition of a refugee under the Convention.

One of the major criticisms of the Convention definition is that it fails to protect many other people whose human rights have been violated - such as victims of armed conflicts, unstable political and economic policies, environmental and natural disasters, as well as "internally displaced persons" uprooted from their homes without having



Image of the US border. Sourced from www.neurotics.com/borderhack

crossed an international frontier. As Eugene Kamenka points out: "The present UN definition of refugees is not a moral definition, but a compromise based on the need to get sufficient support from UN members" (1989: 15).

Current Australian Government policies contravene the Refugee Convention in a multitude of ways. Most glaring is the mandatory detention of asylum seekers. Second there are the temporary protection visas which are granted to asylum seekers when released from detention, which deny asylum seekers the right to work or access housing, English language programs, medical care and counselling services, as well as only allowing them access to

income support for 30 months. These policies violate Article 31 of the Convention which provides that: "Contracting States shall not impose penalties, on account of their illegal entry or presence, on refugee who ... enter or present in their territory without authorisation" (www.unhcr.ch/refworld/legal/instrument/asylum/1951eng.htm).

In July 2000, the U.N. Human Rights Committee criticised Australia for its mandatory detention policies and for not informing, nor allowing, NGOs access to inform detainees of their right to seek legal advice.

In spite of these breaches and the resulting international criticism, the Australian Government has not acted to

instate the fundamental human rights of asylum seekers and refugees. In fact, it has commissioned a review leading to possible restrictions of the Convention.

Melbourne Rally on the 50th Anniversary of the Refugee Convention

Saturday July 28, 11am

*Outside the ANZ Bank in the mall
 Cnr Nicholson and Paisley Sts
 Footscray (melways ref: 42 C4)*

Public Meeting

Tuesday 31st July

6pm, Trades Hall Council

cnr Lygon and Victoria Sts, Carlton

Spices, Oil, and Blood Continued from page 1

However, Sukarno wanted increasingly less to do with foreign "supporters." He wanted to deprivatise all industrial and commercial holdings and return the wealth to the people. In keeping with this view, he leaned increasingly toward the left, allying himself with the growing Indonesian communist party PKI. In 1964, Sukarno refused to accept any more aid from the U.S. government. But his push for independence and socialisation were his downfall. The CIA had begun to create and disseminate vicious anti-communist propaganda, while quietly continuing to funnel money and arms to the Indonesian military, all the while cultivating an alliance with the ultra-right-wing General Suharto.

In the global wings, U.S. corporations were circling like sharks, waiting to go in for the kill. For example, in 1965, Freeport Sulfur cut a private deal (with Henry Kissinger reportedly acting as deal broker) with Indian officials for a share in a proposed gold-copper mining, while Mobile Oil Indonesia entered into a contract with the Indonesian state oil company, Pertamina. Over a dozen other oil companies were waiting for their chance to pounce. All that was needed to complete the scheme was to get rid of Suharno to avoid the risk of most profits going to the Indonesian people.

The CIA helped Suharto plan and Stage a three-part coup. First, in 1965, all of the left-leaning military leaders were murdered and their deaths blamed on the PKI. Second, by convincing the public and Suharno that the communists were trying to topple the government, Suharto got clearance to lead an all-out slaughter of communists. Between 1965-1966 an estimated 500,000 to one million men, women, and children known or suspected of being communists were massacred. Some were murdered in their beds, and a large percentage were killed with U.S-supplied weapons. Time magazine reported during this period that "travelers from [some] areas tell of small rivers and streams that have been literally clogged with bodies."

In the final step of the coup, Suharto deposed Suharno. What followed was a feeding frenzy by Suharto, his henchmen and U.S. corporations. Like a warlord, Suharto appropriated the best of everything he could for himself and his family - oil wells, timber lands, and sugar plantations. Thousands of acres of land were seized by companies with the blessings of Suharto. Tens of thousands of native people were killed, displaced, or "disappeared" to make way for mining, logging, and drilling operations. The Freeport gold operation Kissinger helped orchestrate (and of which he is today the primary stockholder, as well as collecting \$500,000 a year as its chief legal rep through his law firm Kissinger Associates) was the first company to be officially licensed after the coup. By 1969,

nineteen U.S. oil companies were vying for the rights to the oil beneath Indonesia's coastal waters, while Weyerhaeuser, International Paper, and Boise Cascade were hacking down huge tracts of tropical forests in Sumatra as fast as they could hack. Meanwhile, now that the U.S. had "saved" the Indonesian people from communism, they forced the natives to work in the new factories and industrial operations at an average wage of 10 cents an hour.

It is certainly no coincidence that during the same "formative years" of the exploitation of Southeast Asia - 1965-1969 - the war in Vietnam was being launched and prosecuted full force. Why? The main oil-shipping corridor from Indonesia to Japan (and thence to the U.S.) lays between Indonesia and Vietnam. It is interesting to note that Hainan

"While the U.S. companies ripped billions of dollars out of the Indonesian landscape, over 60% of the nation lived below the poverty line, many at the point of starvation."

Island also lies in this corridor - the same area that was the centre of the recent spy plane incursion. This corridor is mentioned in Baker Institute reports on U.S. energy policy as being a "keep out of the hands of the Chinese at all costs" zone. The main shipping corridor to India (another growing oil consumer at that time and now as well) lays between northwestern Indonesia and Cambodia, a fact which just may explain Henry Kissinger's otherwise inexplicable decision during the Vietnam war to bomb neutral Cambodia back into the stone age (sending the country from thence into the nightmare of life under the Khmer Rouge).

While the U.S. companies ripped billions of dollars out of the Indonesian landscape, over 60% of the nation lived below the poverty line, many at the point of starvation. Yet, the Suharto government would always point to all of the new schools and the improved education system as proof of his compassion for his country. (Sound familiar?)

As always, when it comes to corporate greed, enough is never enough. By 1974, the U.S. had lost Vietnam and, under Suharto's despotic, corrupt rule, there were constant outbreaks of rebellion in Indonesia. Nowhere was the push for independence more well-organised and persistent than in East Timor. The progressive governor there decided to allow the formation of multiple political parties, which in turn lead to an intensified push for independence from the oppression of Suharto and foreign interests. The prospect of East Timorese autonomy dismayed Suharto because he and his friends had very valuable holdings in the region, including three oil wells. If the push for independence succeeded, he might lose his "investments". Worse yet, the push for independence could spread through the country, threatening

other interests, such as Kissinger's gold mine.

In 1975, Kissinger orchestrated a surprise invasion of East Timor by the Indonesian military (a fact supported by documents since revealed). Kissinger and Gerald Ford are believed (by many human rights observers and historians) to have been in on the planning of the invasion right up to the moment of initiation. In any case, the two were visiting Suharto on December 6, 1975. The next day, just an hour or so after Air Force One had cleared Indonesian air space, headed for the U.S., the attack was launched and East Timor was declared Indonesia's 27th province. In the process, over 200,000 East Timorese people were slaughtered. Since then, for the oil and mining industries in Indonesia, it has been business as usual.

The 1997-1998 Asian economic crisis hit Indonesia hard and contributed to the long-hoped-for ousting of Suharto. He was replaced in May of 1998 by B.J. Habibie. But the Indonesian people had had enough of being oppressed and abused, of receiving a tiny percentage of the money - if any - generated by the exploitation of their natural resources. The push for freedom, which had sporadically continued in some areas since the terrors of 1975, had reached new, widespread dimensions. In 1999, rioting broke out in Aceh, Ambon, Borneo, and Irian Jaya - all areas heavily exploited by American corporations.

The threat of a new rebellion by East Timor, was, once more, particularly irksome to the corporations and to the oil-fed Indonesian government. A 38,000-square-mile zone called the Timor Gap had just been staked out off the coast of the country and promised to yield unheard of volumes of oil. Habibie was either colossally weak or extraordinarily Machiavellian (or, more likely, was advised by someone extraordinarily Machiavellian). In a show of democratic good will, he allowed East Timor to hold a referendum to decide its independence. An overwhelming 80% of all voters opted for independence. But, as soon as the results had been tallied, the Indonesian government stormed in, just as they had when Suharno had pressed for nationalisation. Thousands of East Timorese were massacred, while one third of the country's residents were forced out of the region and 80% of all structures in the little nation were destroyed. UNICEF reported in 1999 that 114 children had died in concentration camps in West Timor where an estimated 200,000 East Timorese were held in squalid conditions. Hundreds more children were abducted, many for sexual slavery.

Habibie did nothing to stop the military. Meanwhile, he continued to scoop up the largesse of the oil companies. At the height of the slaughter, Philips Petroleum, which had heavy interests in East Timor, paid \$2.9 million to the Indonesian government. According to human



rights activist Jose Ramos Horta (a 1996 Nobel Peace Prize winner), Philips had at that point, never paid a cent to East Timor for the billions of barrels of oil it had removed from the country's waters. Many Timorese activists believe that the destruction of 80% of the country's buildings was all part of the collusion between the Indonesian government and foreign powers, including the U.S. Since the tragedy, \$1.2 billion in rebuilding funds have poured into East Timor, along with thousands of foreign "carpet baggers" eager to "rebuild." It was 1975 all over again "This is not much different from the [previous] Indonesian invasion," says Maria Bernadino of East Timor's Rebuild Watch. "All they need to do now is to go around shooting people and torturing people." And, as always, all the jobs in the "rebuilding" effort went (and are still going) to foreigners, while a staggering 95%

of natives have, on occasion in the past few years, been unemployed.

In a last crowing outrage - and proof of the repeating patterns at work - as the political smoke subsided, in February 2000, Habibie's recently-appointed replacement Wahid announced that he had named Henry Kissinger his advisor. Just one year later, at the first big shindig thrown in Washington DC for newly-sworn in Bush, Kissinger was also be there, ready to advise - and help begin a new reign of energy despotism... Today, the U.S. corporations continue their tradition of usurping rights and trashing land...only now, thanks to Bush, they are bringing the tradition to U.S. soil. Standby to see land seized, people displaced and who knows what other crimes committed, in the name of oil and minerals.

Bracks heads abroad to promote GE

GLENDALINDSAY

Unbeknown to most Victorians, \$110 million of taxes have been allocated by the State government to boost genetic engineering (GE) research, development and commercialisation.

Premier Bracks left this week with Victorian Biotechnology Ambassador Prof Adrienne Clark and around a hundred pro-GE Victorian scientists and business people for the annual world GE industry gathering, Bio2001 - June 24 to 27 in San Diego USA.

They intend to promote Victoria as 'the place to be' for transnational companies involved in genetic engineering (GE) of our foods, food processing aids, stock feed, drugs and therapeutics.

Victoria's "Biotechnology Strategic Development Plan", drafted over the past eighteen months by government, industry and science interests, is an aggressive plan to promote and fund GE research, development and commercialisation.

It completely sidesteps any debate on whether Victorian citizens support or want to publicly fund or participate in the promotion of GE. Yet this program will initially cost taxpayers more than \$50 million for the Bio21 program, \$40 million via the STI initiative, and \$20 million via the TCP. These monies were allocated prior to the

first public announcement and release of the draft plan.

"Agriculture Minister Keith Hamilton's proposal for GE-free zones for organic and conventional farmers and national parks, is obviously a Trojan horse to allay public concern while the government sells out the state," according to Bob Phelps of the Australian GeneEthics Network. "Victoria's current clean, green status is a valuable and irreplaceable asset to our community, especially farmers," adds Cam Walker of Friends of the Earth.

Due to North America's widespread genetic contamination by GE crops, farmers there have trouble selling their food products except as food aid and animal feed. Last year US farmers lost \$400million in sales of GE canola due to worldwide rejection of GE crops, and are unwilling to plant GE canola this season. Why risk the same here?

Greens Senate candidate, Scott Kinnear condemns Victoria's approach to GE in agriculture, noting: "Sustainable, in-demand alternatives like organics get only a tiny fraction of the government funding put into GE. Yet they are much more viable options for our environment, health and economy."

Keep an eye on the next edition of the Paper for more details.

WorldBriefs

...Continued from page 2

conspiracy of silence," Amnesty International said, stressing that this is due to the social stigma often attached to homosexuality and transsexuality.

Generalised tolerance of abuses against LGBT people, fear of retaliation and reluctance by the victims to gain exposure, are some of the factors contributing to this silence. Incidents of sexual identity-based ill-treatment remain largely unreported and under investigated, and those responsible are seldom brought to justice. "To combat this phenomenon, a clear message must come from the authorities - the torture and ill-treatment of people on the basis of their sexual orientation cannot be tolerated, all instances of it will be properly investigated and those responsible brought to justice," the Amnesty said.

References: www.oneworld.net, www.amnesty.org, www.hrw.org

STATISTICS

According to UK UNICEF, in the last decade:

- 2 million children were killed by conflict
- 6 million children have been injured or disabled
- 12 million children were made homeless. Of the world's 40 million displaced people, 20 million are children
- more than 300,000 children have been involved in military activity
- 8-10,000 children are killed every year by landmines (far more than adults)
- 10 million children have witnessed traumatic acts of brutality or conflict

500 million small arms and light weapons are currently in circulation - one for every twelve people on the planet.

ONLINE MEDIA SITES

www.melbourne.indymedia.org
www.freespeech.org
www.oneworld.org
www.mediachannel.org
www.active.org.au
www.nettime.org
www.blueear.com
www.ips.org
www.apc.org
www.indymedia.org
www.microradio.net
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www.criticaltimes.com.au
www.adelaide.indymedia.org.au
www.thepaper.org.au

Representing the movement

ALEX KELLY

Many mainstream commentators on the so-called "anti-globalisation" protests fail to address the real reasons behind the mobilisations and as a result foster misunderstandings of this fledgling movement.

The definition of "small groups" of protesters as "violent" and "un-Australian" who partake in "urban guerrilla warfare" is getting tired. This misrepresentation generates a cynical critique of the 'mainstream media' bowing down to the corporate order and avoiding a real assessment of the remarkable events of the last two years. But perhaps things aren't so bad. Perhaps the simplistic line asserted by many of those attempting to define the explosion of street action is merely an indication of their distance from the grass roots, rather than a fundamental commitment to the rhetoric of the status quo.

It has become standard to dismiss the crowds as rabble rousing "ferals" and to overlook the amazing diversity within the groups on the streets. By focusing on the small numbers of balaclavas and dreadlocks, journalism of this kind fail to note the majority of participants - unionists, anarchists, forest activists, Falun Gong practitioners - people of all ages, colors and creeds.

An emerging tactic employed to dismiss protesters is to compare them, as The Age's Gerald Henderson does, to terrorists. The United Kingdom's "Terrorism Act 2000" expands the definition of terrorism to include wearing an item of clothing which creates a "reasonable suspicion" that you

are a member or supporter of a prescribed group - and carries a ten year jail sentence. Henderson compares protesters in Seattle and more recently, Gothenburg to the recently executed Timothy McVeigh.

Also from The Age James Norman suggests that some of the gains of the protests are a "mainstream engagement with both the negative and positive aspects of globalisation, and a building recognition - even among political elites - that matters of ethics and environmental and labor standards must now be regarded

The movement is often traced back to the counter WTO protests of Seattle in November 1999, when in fact its roots are in the resistance of indigenous peoples and marginalised communities in southern countries around the globe. The movements history begins with the 1994 armed uprising of the Zapatistas indigenous liberation army of Chiapas Mexico or the incredible mobilisations in India against the MAI and WTO - not Seattle or Melbourne.

Also unique, yet rarely explored, are the modes of organising emerging from within

Henderson compares protesters in Seattle and more recently, Gothenburg to the recently executed Timothy McVeigh

as cornerstones of so-called free trade." This is an incredibly naïve stance to take. What has become apparent is that political elites and corporates see the need to create considerable spin, in direct response to the protests, on their apparent "good corporate citizenry", but very few concrete examples of any tangible shift in trade or production practice are available.

It is also common to regard the protests in the same light as those of the Vietnam War era and to deem members of organisations such as the International Socialist Organisation like David Glanz as "protest organisers".

What is actually going on - the energy that has inspired so many disparate groups to join together in mass actions - is a new way of organising and the inspiration of a new sentiment of resistance.

this movement. There are strong autonomous tendencies characterised by groups such as the international People's Global Action (PGA) and Melbourne's Autonomous Web of Liberation (AWOL). These groups, of which there are thousands more, are opposed to hierarchical organising and work in affinity groups, communicating through spokes councils and other horizontal structures. There is an emphasis on personal liberty and institutional power is shunned. The spontaneous, D.I.Y (do it yourself) sentiment is strong within these groups and is to my mind one of the main reasons that numbers on the streets of Western cities have swelled in the last few years.

It has struck me as remarkable that there has been so little discussion of this in any media analysis - not just the mainstream - of the protests thus

far. I am putting this down to two things. Firstly - many journalists are simply not connected to these movements - especially those with an anti-media D.I.Y ethic - and not actually aware of the sentiments regarding action and protest which are gaining popularity. Secondly - groups such as the ISO and DSP, who have a small membership base, are keen to use these protests as a platform for recruitment and self advancement happily fulfilling the role of spokesperson for a movement which actually rejects representation.

The good protester / bad protester dichotomy is also worth assessing. This distinction is akin to the "rogue states" rhetoric of the American government - an interesting parallel when one considers the violence displayed by the police which proceeds largely unchecked. It is a shame that there is no discussion of the definition of violence regarding smashing a store window - when the products in that store themselves have been produced on what could be defined as violent terms. I am not advocating trashing stores or fighting riot police, I am however suggesting we look further than the dominant, limiting and clichéd depiction of protesters.

Rather than a simplistic dismissal of the protesters as "violent" "ferals" who stupidly oppose the "inevitable" it might do well for people to explore exactly what makes people active - and to understand the urgency with which we are faced if we wish to "rescue the future".

Badja Forest update

Forest activists have been holding two roads into unlogged oldgrowth areas in Badja State Forest, near Cooma NSW, for the past two months.

The blockade started when roading operations were discovered in unlogged old growth compartments, some of the last patches of such forest in the area. The threatened compartments (2020 and 2029) were previously identified as wilderness, before being mysteriously de-identified some time later when the Regional



Forest Agreement left the area open for logging.

On discovery of the operations, South East Forest Rescue and The Wilderness Society captured machinery in the area with tripods and lock-ons, and released it only on condition that it be removed from the forest. Since then there has been visits by both loggers and police, but no attempt has yet been made to break the camp. The rescue now includes a Fort and tree-sits, as well as newer and traditional pole structures.

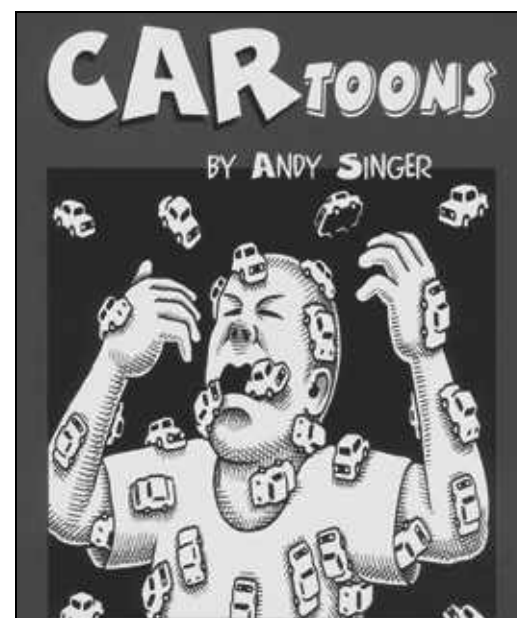
Attention has now turned to other unprotected high-value forests in the region, which state forests are now moving into. After successful actions at Dampier and the Harris-Daishowa woodchip mill at Eden, forest rescuers say that it is now time to strengthen the campaign.

For information on Fort Badja check out: www.rescue.forests.org.au

CARtoons

This is a 100-page book written and illustrated by Andy Singer and published by Car Busters. It looks at the impact of automobiles on American society and the world. It features over 89 cartoons and illustrations as well as facts, figures, resources and a foreword by Jane Holtz Kay (author of Asphalt Nation). The images in it may be freely reproduced for the non-profit use of individuals or groups fighting cars. For this purpose, it comes with an optional CD-rom containing all of the images in the book (and more) in 600dpi, tif format.

Prices: \$12 for the book, \$8 for the CD-rom, or \$20 for the two, postage included. Cheques can be made out to Car Busters and sent to Car Busters, c/o 7 Stewart St, Brunswick 3056



Clicks and Cuts: media news

Australia: New Community Licences in Sydney

The Australian Broadcasting Authority has decided to allocate three new community radio licences to serve Sydney. The licences will be allocated to Free Broadcast Incorporated (FBI), Gadigal Information Service (Gadigal) and Muslim Community Radio (MCR). FBI will aim to serve the youth, arts and local music communities, Gadigal will aim to serve the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander community and MCR will aim to serve the Muslim community. There were three applicants that did satisfy the ABA on both these counts but whose arguments for being allocated a licence were, in the ABA's view, not as compelling as the three successful applicants. They were OutFM Pty Ltd (OutFM) and Sydney Gay and Lesbian Broadcasters Incorporated (FREE FM), both targeting the gay, lesbian, bisexual and transgender community and Sydney Youth Radio Inc (WILD FM), targeting the mainstream youth (14-30) community and young people who identify with the dance/club culture.

Russia: Kremlin Plans TV-6 Arrests

President Putin is planning to order moves against the TV-6 channel, including searches and arrests, sources close to the Media Ministry have told the Russia Journal. Putin apparently does not believe TV-6 chief Yevgeny Kiselyov's assurances that "TV-6 will become a neutral and apolitical channel," which the former NTV general director made after moving to TV-6 with much of his team following

NTV's seizure by Gazprom in April. The sources, who asked not to be named, said Putin senses a threat coming from a group of professional journalists with strong political convictions who "enjoy the support of the authoritative liberal intelligentsia."

Mergers: Murdoch Stripping Assets To Save Tax

The Financial Times says Rupert Murdoch is stripping core assets from Sky Global, his digital-businesses holding company, to secure the acquisition of DirecTV, the leading U.S. satellite broadcaster. The scaling down of Sky Global is designed to ensure that General Motors - the world's largest carmaker and owner of Hughes Electronics, parent of DirecTV - is not lumbered with a giant tax bill by the deal. Merging Sky Global and Hughes would give Mr. Murdoch control of the world's first global satellite TV network, stretching across Asia, Europe and the Americas.

Internet: E-Warfare Jams Navy Recruitment Site

About 1,500 protesters brought a U.S. Navy recruitment Web site to a standstill after flooding it with protest messages. The organisers invited demonstrators to protest Navy bombing exercises on the island of Vieques, off Puerto Rico in the Caribbean. Activists filled out the Navy's online enlistment form with a protest message in place of the name, address and other information fields. A Navy Web manager called organisers with a plea to end the action, exclaiming: "You've flooded the enlistment database with thousands of

messages, and now our servers are slowing down, you've got to stop it."

East Timor: New Book Condemns "Diplomatic Deceits"

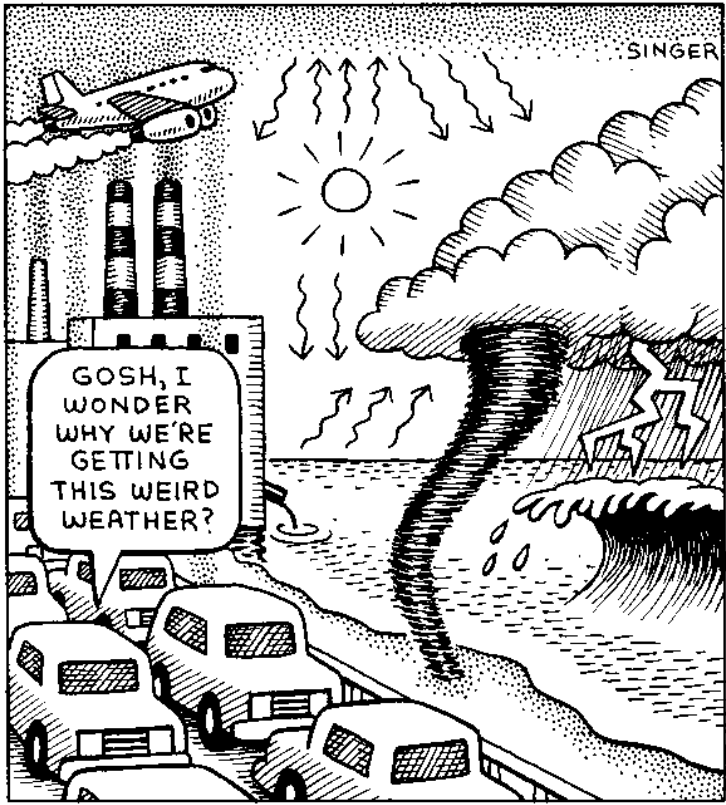
An Australian book on media coverage of East Timor argues that Labor and Coalition governments from 1974 to 1999 failed to appreciate the media's independence, according to a review in the Canberra Times. This resulted in the media complicating both Coalition and Labor government attempts to maintain a pragmatic policy on East Timor. The complications arose, says the book, "Diplomatic Deceits," because media were reporting on the controversies about East Timor, especially in the parliamentary sphere, and in so doing were examining how the role of governments during this time often differed in reality from their public statements. Author Rodney Tiffen demonstrates the falsity of allegations by politicians that the media's coverage was crudely anti-Indonesian or constituted revenge for the five journalists killed at Balibo. And he does not hold back from criticising the lies and evasions used by politicians and officials over the past 25 years, describing them as motivated by a "skewed morality."

We invite your input. If you have any interesting media news that should be included in The Paper or if you think there is a topic we should follow up, please contact us.

Send your comments and ideas to: jason@thepaper.org.au

NO EXIT © Andy Singer

THE GREENHOUSE EFFECT



ART:CULT

THE WORLD AS ONE presents a "serious and unsentimental" photographic documentation of Germany after 1989. This new generation of German photographers exhibiting at Melbourne's Centre for Contemporary Photography (205 Johnston St, Fitzroy) concentrate on themes such as the effects of German unification, the withdrawal of the Russian Army and the rapid development into a "post-industrial decline".

Experimental digital music holds a substantial platform in mid July. **WAVEFORM 2001**, is a three day meeting of ideas and sounds in Sydney featuring concerts, paper sessions, installations and interactives and artist talks - involved are Phill Niblock, Gate, pimmon, Hiaz of Farmer's Manual and Martin Ng. Held at Centre for Contemporary Performance (University of Western Sydney, South Werrington Campus) from July 12 - 14, daily registration costs \$75/\$44.

Melbourne's Australian Centre for Contemporary Art (Dallas Brooks Drive, Sth Yarra) is privileged to host **EAR AESTHETICS/EAR POLITICS** - Csaba Toth's leading commentary on Japan's sonic underground. Toth will talk of all concerning Japan's vibrant noise output, discussing Merzbow, Hijo Kaidan, The Residents and more. Friday July 13, 6:30pm at the, tickets costing \$7/\$5.

Until July 15 at Brisbane's Powerhouse (119 Lamington St, New Farm) photographer Ray Cook camps-up historical and mythical figures in a series of witty interpretations from a queer perspective. Redefining a culture that has remained largely ignored and hidden throughout history, Cook's **THE HISTORY OF LOVE**

does so with humour, irony, feathers and fetish.

Ensuring due praise to the art of wall postering, Revolver Upstairs (Chapel St, Prahan, Melbourne) is starting **POST MO' BILLS**, a monthly tribute from Thursday July 5, where selected artists will wallpaper a 4x4 metre feature space. Yet to see whether this night will simply enshrine the increasingly common occurrences of commercial promotion framed as guerilla art, the photocopy'n'glue aesthetic is definitely worth a showing.

QUT Art Museum (2 George St, Brisbane) houses **ASIA IN AUSTRALIA: BEYOND ORIENTALISM**, a body of work from Australian artists taking direct influence from specific Asian regions. In doing so they are confronting popular understandings of Asia as a holiday destination, potential threat or simply as "the Orient." Until July 8.

On Saturday July 7, visiting Swiss artist Isler Bayer, brings **60 SECONDS** to Jacksue Gallery (486 Murray St, Perth) - a work featuring 500 condoms, 500 firecrackers, 250 litres of coloured paint and a long fuse.

A Note from the ArtCult Editors -

This is a calling to all artists and culturalites. We need your contributions so that ArtCult can cover a broad range of ideas and events - from the local to the national. So write an article [or tell us an idea for one], a review or interview, inform us of interesting events, send us a picture or image, or get involved in the Arts and Culture section yourself.

Email: artcult@thepaper.org.au

Punk: Tsubi Style

TIARI NGUYEN

"We're so pretty, oh so pretty ...va-cunt", The Sex Pistols

One of the most anticipated shows at last month's Australian Fashion Week was from Sydney-based label, tsubi. With a catwalk covered in live rats, tsubi presented models in white shirts that were customised with "lying, cheating cunt" in five-inch black letters across the back. The collection also featured jeans that were torn and decorated with masking tape, leather patches and emblems and hooded tops that had Mohawks attached to the

crown. International and local buyers alike called for tsubi to be celebrated for their originality and fearlessness in delivering 'new punk', a style that is now being served up in Dangerfield and Sportsgirl alike.

Clearly, tsubi does more than upset the wardrobe. The collection highlights a consistent theme in the story of counter-cultural movements: the diffusion of a subcultural style to the fashion market. Although this process is not new - punk clothing and insignia could be bought by mail order in the summer of 1977 - what does it mean when what is supposedly a mindset, becomes

commodified?

By being able to buy what Vivien Westwood calls "confrontation dressing" it seems possible to simultaneously buy into punk notions of taste, authority and resistance. Suddenly, slinging a studded belt from Dangerfield around the waist of your customised tsubi jeans allows the rebellion of punk to be bought, consumed and embodied, without threatening notions of the status quo. Punk becomes both safe and liberating. Identity based on trends becomes fleeting and disposable.

OOPS...

Sincere apologies to Karina Smith (Debt Crisis and the Arts, Edition 13) whose name was printed as "Katrina". Sorry 'bout that Karina!

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You can call us on 0409 417 556 or drop us an email at info@thepaper.org.au

We look forward to hearing from you.



© Tom Sevil

All the news that fits

Australia has the second highest bank fees in the world.

Australians pay an average of \$360 per year in bank fees - compared to the equivalent of \$30 per year for British customers. Australia also has the world's highest charges for using automatic teller machines. The Sunday Telegraph reports that banks are currently making record profits. Having a bank or financial institution account is now effectively compulsory: most employers will only pay into an account, and the Tax Office requires one for some refunds. Financial Services Minister Joe Hockey said customers could reduce fees and charges if they used services more efficiently.

SOURCE: The Cruikshank Report, carried out for the British government, reported in the Fairfax press.

Small business would welcome a recession if it meant that staff would be more reluctant to pursue unfair dismissal claims, according to Curt Rendall of the Institute of Chartered Accountants.

SOURCE: Financial Review.

Victorian Premier Steve Bracks

has defended his \$7970 pay rise. The Premier's wage will rise from \$221,430 to \$229,400 from July 2001. The Prime Minister's wage will rise by \$8600 to almost \$248,000 per year.

SOURCE: Herald Sun.

The Chairman of IBM, Lou Gerstner, has been given an honorary knighthood. The knighthood was for "services to e-commerce and education".

SOURCE: Fairfax Press.

Small towns across Australia deserved to die if they waited for governments to help them, according to National Party MP Stuart St Clair.

SOURCE: Fairfax.

Regular mobile phone users have more than double the normal risk of developing a brain tumour. People who have used a mobile for more than ten years are 2.6 times more likely to develop tumours - according to research based on the older analogue system. Research head Lennart Hardell said that the effects of digital mobile phones would not be known for about five years.

SOURCE: Research presented

at the Mobile Telephones and Health Conference in London, and reported in the Fairfax press.

The average worker will pay approximately \$11,000 more tax over the next ten years because of 'bracket creep'. Tax cuts were meant to make up for the higher cost of living caused by the GST. However, as wages go up with inflation, people move into higher tax brackets. Since the tax brackets are not adjusted for inflation, people pay more tax.

SOURCE: Figures prepared for the Herald Sun.

Government advertising promoting the GST and other parts of the 'New Tax System' cost an average of \$50 for each Australian taxpayer.

SOURCE: Herald Sun.

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Tactical Intervention: Ping Pong and Wagner

JIM SINGLINE

Perth's longest escalator is momentarily transformed into a ping-pong waterfall. Advertising billboards and disposable packaging are converted into landscapes of tropical paradise. Periodic insertions of phrases from Wagner operas are included in the Personals and Classifieds of the local newspapers.

Such surprises are set to refresh Perth as the city-wide exhibition, Tactical Intervention Strategies (TIS) begins on July 5. With an underlying tone of "deadly serious light-heartedness", nineteen different artworks, projects and events will further the concept of intervention: seeking to refuse, subvert, and re-negotiate today's accepted meanings, ideologies and structures. Despite an international craving for the integral function of intervention, curator Marcus Canning specifically notes, "this is a city that is empty at 7pm most nights. One aims to inject life into a zone that is so banal."

The last century saw the emergence of movements based on tactics of intervention, including the Situationists, feminist revisionists, Land Art, punk and Dadaism. TIS seeks to strike a balance between re-negotiations that act "within the white-cube reality of the 'art-world' and those past the door-step into the real-world."

Based at the Perth Institute of Contemporary Art, various exhibits will challenge orthodox interactions with the gallery environment. Christian de Vietri's work on opening night, consisting of 50 hired security guards (with an approximate total mass of 4 tonnes!) at his disposal, suggests a fine start to meet such aims. Visiting Swiss collective, AIRLINE, choose to tackle the aerial space of the gallery, suspending a web of ropes, truck-tyre tubes, white leather and futon mattress-stuffing seven metres off the floor. Canning explains that people can climb rope ladders to float in the air and experience the space "in a different way, in a playful way."

One video work sees mullet-sporting Jason Donovan, sniped and spliced from an early Neighbours moment into obsessive repetition, playing on the "episodic retro sentimentality" associated with such television. Other videos tease the increasing prominence of city

surveillance cameras, delighting in demonstrating the "best dress codes and behavioural patterns to ensure that you are noticed by your friendly neighbourhood surveillance technician." These works draw attention to the major curatorial concern, "the tactics and strategies of intervention being used, rather than the message being pushed." The wildly eclectic nature of the different works reflects the lack of any party-line agenda, beyond one of playfulness.

In the early stages of gathering TIS, Canning thought of the practitioners he had seen operating in Perth throughout the last 10 years who's work had never been significantly shown in the framework of an institutional show. These include figures such as Kaouti practising Hakim Bey's concept of Aesthetic

Terrorism, and Mickie Quick, responsible for the slick guerilla tactics liberating the Masters of World Business billboards featuring Gorbachev and Norman Schwarzkopf. Placing such radical strategies in a traditional exhibition context was bound to raise the question "is the power of these works consequently diminished?"

Canning explains that "as a consequence of such concerns, artists were saying 'we don't want to take part.' As the overall identity for the show emerged people started to see that this was something a little bit different. It's trying to play against the old 'either / or', 'inside / outside'. Possibly, as an entirety, the work

actually subverts the institutionalisation of such ideas, despite being presented through an institution."

In anticipation of the opening, it appears as if TIS might have walked some of these tightropes and maximised a dynamic interventional forum. Ironically, the National Gallery of Western Australia - who shares a frontal courtyard with PICA - is not permitting the installation of "Culture Gut", a public art statement consisting of a caravan in an industrial bin. The apparent reasoning was the concurrent showing of a Monet extravaganza. Somehow this proves intervention, no matter how light-hearted, to continue as a threat, a necessity, and in Tactical Intervention Strategies' case, a whole lot of fun.

Tactical Intervention Strategies is showing at Perth Institute of Contemporary Arts (Perth Cultural Centre) from July 5 to August 14.



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